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Benjamin L. Cardin

Benjamin L. Cardin has represented Maryland's Third Congressional District in the House of Representatives since 1987. He is a member of the Ways and Means Committee, Ranking Member of the Human Resources Subcommittee and a member of the Social Security Subcommittee. He also is a member of the Homeland Security Committee, and is the Ranking Member of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (the Helsinki Commission). In 2001, he was named by Worth Magazine as among the top "100 people who have influenced the way Americans think about money."

In the House, the Congressman has been a leader on fiscal issues, pension reform, and health care. His legislation to increase the amount Americans can put into their 401 (k) plans and IRAs was enacted into law in 2001. His proposal to expand Medicare to include preventive benefits such as colorectal, prostate, mammogram, and osteoporosis screening was also enacted into law. He also has authored legislation to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit for chronic illnesses; fund graduate medical education; and guarantee coverage for emergency services.

As the leading Democrat on the Human Resources Subcommittee, Mr. Cardin has introduced legislation that would bring welfare reform to the next level by helping those who leave public assistance get the skills they need so they can work their way out of poverty. His bill to increase education and support services for foster care children between ages 18 and 21 was signed into law in 1999. He has authored bills to expand child support, hold fathers more accountable, improve the welfare-to-work program and increase the child-care tax credit.

In 1998, Rep. Cardin was appointed Chairman of the Special Study Commission on Maryland Public Ethics Law by the MD General Assembly. In 1997, he co-chaired the Bipartisan Ethics Task Force in an effort to reform ethics procedures in the House of Representatives. He also holds leadership positions on the Organization, Study and Review Committee and the Steering Committee of the Democratic Caucus and serves as Senior Democratic Whip.

As a Maryland legislator, Mr. Cardin served in the Maryland House of Delegates from 1967-1986. He was Speaker from 1979-1986 and prior to that served as chairman of the Ways & Means Committee from 1974-1979. As Speaker, he was credited with reforming Maryland's property tax system, the school financing formula and the ethical standards for elected officials.

A 1967 graduate of the University of Maryland School of Law (first in his class), he earned his B.A. degree in 1964 from University of Pittsburgh (cum laude). He also holds honorary degrees from the University of Baltimore School of Law (1990); University of Maryland at Baltimore (1993); Baltimore Hebrew University (1994); and Goucher College (1996). From 1988-1995, he chaired the Maryland Legal Services Corp. From 1988-1999, he served on the St. Mary's College of Maryland Board of Trustees, and in 2002, he was appointed to the St. Mary's Advisory Board for the Study of Democracy. In 1999, he was appointed to the Goucher College Board of Trustees.

Rep. Cardin's numerous awards include: Congressional Service Award, American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, 2003; Outstanding Leadership Award, American Occupational Therapy Assn., 2003; Congressional Champion Award, The National Coalition for Cancer Research, 2002; Congressional Leadership Award, The American College of Emergency Physicians, 2001; National Leadership Award for Service to Children and Families, Casey Family Services, 2000; Congressional Advocate of the Year Award, Child Welfare League of America, 2000; The American Medical Association's Dr. Nathan Davis Award for Public Service, 1999; The Small Business Council of America's Congressional Award, 1999 & 1993; and the Concord Coalition's "Deficit Hawk" Honor Roll, 1999 & 1998.

Rep. Cardin is married to Myrna Edelman Cardin.